



E– Bulletin for NGOs on the Durban Review Conference

This new series of E-bulletins is issued by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide regular updates and guidance for NGOs in the lead up to the Durban Review Conference, which is scheduled to be held in Geneva from 20 to 24 April 2009.

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In 2001, the United Nations organized the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa. The conference was attended by more than 10,000 people from all regions of the world and led to the adoption by consensus of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, which to date is the most important framework in the combat against racism and racial discrimination. In 2006, the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 61/49, decided to convene in 2009 a Review Conference on the Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and requested the Human Rights Council to undertake preparation for the Conference.

PREPARING FOR THE DURBAN REVIEW CONFERENCE

Where to find relevant information

A dedicated webpage in all official UN languages is accessible through the OHCHR's main webpage, where official information and documentation regarding the Preparatory Committee, its Intersessional Open-ended Working Group, and the Durban Review Conference will be available, including the session programme of work, the agenda and annotated agenda, information on accreditation procedure, room-booking for side events, and modalities on the list of speakers, as well as other documentation.
<http://www.un.org/durbanreview2009/index.shtml>

A Webcast service, containing the archives of past Preparatory Committee sessions, as well as live broadcast of the session in progress, is also available through: www.un.org/durbanreview2009/webcast

The Secretariat strongly encourages NGOs to regularly consult the relevant Durban Review Conference webpage, which will be updated as new information becomes available: www.un.org/durbanreview2009

Accreditation to the Durban Review Process

NGOs must be accredited in order to take part in the Review Conference and its Preparatory Process. The [Preparatory Committee](#) of the Review Conference considers applications for accreditation by NGOs and will hold its third substantive session in April 2009. **The deadline for accreditation is now passed (10 February 2009).**

Automatic Accreditation

NGOs are automatically accredited to the Durban Review Conference and its preparatory process if they are in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

NGOs that were accredited to take part in the 2001 WCAR are also automatically accredited *unless* an objection has been raised by Member States to their participation in the Review Process. These NGOs were asked to provide further information to the PrepCom, which then took decisions on their accreditation. The decisions can be found in the reports of two substantive sessions of the Preparatory Committee. <http://www.un.org/durbanreview2009/process.shtml>

- The full text of criteria and arrangements that are applied to ensure a wide participation of NGOs at the Durban Review Conference and its preparatory process may be found in PrepCom's decision PC 1/2 of 27 August 2007 and PrepCom decision 2/6 of 30 April 2008. www.un.org/durbanreview2009/pdf/PrepCom_Decision_1_2.pdf
- The list of non-governmental organizations not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that were granted accreditation to participate at the WCAR and whose accreditation to the Durban Review Conference and its preparatory process was not questioned by any Member State may be consulted at: http://www.un.org/durbanreview2009/pdf/NGO_list_WCAR.pdf

Guidance regarding NGO participants' **registration** will be placed on the website as soon as it is available.

NGO Written Statements

NGOs accredited to the Durban Review Conference may submit written statements during the preparatory process (in accordance with paragraph 52 of ECOSOC resolution 1996/31).

During the Review Conference, written statements submitted by NGOs will be distributed by the Secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the language in which the statements are made available to the Secretariat of the Review Conference. Statements submitted on behalf of an NGO need to be related to the work of the Review Conference and on a subject in which the NGO has a special competence.

All materials must bear the stamp of the submitting organization. Materials containing abusive and offensive language will not be accepted.

NGO Oral Statements

NGOs accredited to the Durban Review process may make oral statements under substantive items of the Preparatory Committee and/or Durban Review Conference agenda by requesting the Secretariat to place your organization on the list of speakers under a specific item. Pursuant to rule 66 (3) of the provisional rules of procedure of the DRC, observers may upon the invitation of the presiding officer and subject to the approval of the Conference, make oral statements on questions in which they have special competence. If the number of requests to speak is too large, the NGOs shall be requested to form themselves into constituencies, such constituencies to speak through spokespersons.

In accordance with the procedure followed at previous Conferences, the speaking times proposed will be allotted as follows: 7 minutes for dignitaries, 5 minutes for UN States and 3 minutes for all observers. A system of lights installed on the will signal the approach of the end of the speaking time.

If you are planning to make a statement at the meeting:

- Keep it brief and to the point;
- Be relevant to the agenda item;
- Please note that interpretation facilities are usually available;
- Oral statements must respect the time limits established by the Preparatory Committee;
- **25 copies of the oral statement are to be provided to the UN Conference Service** at the beginning of the relevant meeting. Conference Service staff can be

- approached in the middle of the plenary room. Photocopiers will be available near the plenary room;
- The list of speakers' desk will be located inside the plenary room. NGOs can only be (pre-) registered by persons holding a badge of the concerned NGO;
 - To take the floor, NGO speakers should use the conference-table seat reserved for that purpose.
 - Kindly note that small delegations of well-coordinated people may be more effective than large groups of single-issue delegations;
 - Additional copies of NGO oral statements may be placed by NGOs **only** on the tables at the back of the plenary room, **after** delivery of the relevant statement. **NGOs are not permitted to distribute documents, pamphlets or any other material in the conference room.** Reserved desks will be available **outside** the plenary room for display of documentation, clearly attributable to accredited NGOs.
 - Language that is deemed abusive or offensive will not be accepted and any NGO using such language may be excluded from sessions.

All participating NGOs are kindly reminded of the principles outlined in ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 on the consultative relationship between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations.

Organization of side events during the Durban Review Conference

In order to facilitate the broadest participation of all stakeholders in the Durban Review Conference, a number of meeting rooms will be made available for the organization of side events for participants accredited to the Conference.

Such events may be held daily from 0900h-1800h from 20-24 April 2009 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

Organizers should consult the Guidance Note on Side Events and complete the inscription form **no later than 14 April 2009**. The inscription form and Guidance Note will be posted on the Durban Review Conference web site at: www.un.org/durbanreview2009/updates.

Keeping in mind the goals and objectives of the Durban Review Conference, side events should focus on the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. They should provide an opportunity to review progress made in the combat against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the actual implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels since 2001, as well as the sharing of best practices.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will compile and review all received requests to ensure the broadest participation of stakeholders and a diverse range of themes and issues relating to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. When organizing side events, organizers are encouraged to coordinate their efforts to avoid

duplication of events. Where duplicate requests are received, the Secretariat shall endeavour to ensure a coordination of efforts and to encourage the co-sponsorship of events. Where there is clear duplication, the Secretariat reserves the right to facilitate the holding of the event to that which is most closely associated to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Organizers shall only be afforded space should their proposal be clearly in line with these criteria. Should the request be confirmed, the Conference Secretariat shall be in contact with the organizers concerning the next steps to take including possible time slots, rooms and services available.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will also host side events relating to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Information on these side events will also be posted on the Durban Review Conference website at:
www.un.org/durbanreview2009/updates.

Any additional queries on side events should be sent by email to:
reviewconferenceevent@ohchr.org or by fax to: + 41 22 928 9050.

New visa arrangements for Switzerland

Switzerland has now joined the **Schengen group of countries**, which means **visa regulations have changed**. Switzerland formally became a part of the European Union's Schengen Agreement on 12 December 2008. This may mean that **applying for a Swiss visa may take more time than on previous occasions**. Visitors from some countries who did not previously need visas to enter Switzerland may now need to apply for a visa.

It is strongly advised to contact the competent Swiss Representation in your country well in advance to inquire about documentation requirements and the time needed to process visa requests. For general information, please refer to the Website of the Federal Office of Migration:

http://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/en/home/themen/einreise/merkblatt_einreise.html

NGOs may also access details on the new procedures on the website of the UNOG's Central Support Services: <http://sca.unog.un.org/Visa/Default.aspx>. In addition, NGOs are encouraged to seek specific information and guidance at the Swiss diplomatic representation in their country well in advance.

Practical information

Accommodation

The following link with *Mandat International* provides practical information to facilitate your stay in Geneva, including advice on low cost accommodation: <http://www.welcomedesk.org>. OHCHR regrets that it is unable to provide assistance in this regard.

Public Transport

Tram and bus: The Palais des Nations is served by several tram and bus lines: Buses 8, 28, F, V and Z serve Pregny Gate (**Appia** stop) where the Pass and Identification Unit is located.

Trams number 13 and 15, as well as buses 5, 8, 11, 14, 28, V, F, and Z serve the Place des Nations. Place des Nations, where the Nations Gate is located, is some 500 metres away from the Pregny Gate.

The number 28 bus serves Cointrin Airport from the Place des Nations. Further information such as itineraries, timetables, fares, etc. is available on the site of the <http://www.tpg.ch/fr/index.php>.

Taxis: A taxi stand is located on Route de Pregny, some 25 metres from the Pregny Gate, direction Place des Nations. Taxis are usually available round the clock. The following direct telephone number may be of help: +41 (0) 22 331 41 33. Kindly note that taxis are not permitted to enter the UN.

Additional Information

OHCHR will provide updated information in due course regarding room availability, IT support, additional information and NGO briefings in due course.

For further questions and queries, kindly note the following contact detail:

Email: NGODurbanRevConf@ohchr.org

Fax: +41 (0)22 917 90 11